



Northeast Multispecies Information Sheet Charter/Party and Recreational Fishing



This summary is not a substitute for the regulations; rather it provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements. You are strongly encouraged to read the regulations in conjunction with this information sheet to fully understand how this fishery is managed. This information sheet will be updated as regulations are revised. The measures described here may be found at 50 CFR 648.88 and § 648.89.

Introduction:

The following measures apply to private recreational fishing vessels in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), charter/party permitted vessels, and Northeast (NE) multispecies permitted vessels fishing under the charter/party or recreational regulations (and not fishing under a NE multispecies day-at-sea (DAS)). The term NE multispecies refers to the following fishes: American plaice, Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, haddock, ocean pout, offshore hake, pollock, redfish, red hake, silver hake, white hake, windowpane flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, and yellowtail flounder.

Minimum Fish Sizes and Possession Limits for Recreational and Charter/Party Vessels:

Species		Total Length (Inches)	Possession Limit
Atlantic cod	Inside GOM RMA*	24	10 fish per <u>person</u> per day (Possession prohibited November 1-March 31)
	Outside GOM RMA	22	10 fish per <u>person</u> per day [†]
Atlantic halibut		36	1 fish per <u>vessel</u> per trip
Haddock		19	Unlimited
Pollock		19	Unlimited
Witch flounder (gray sole)		14	Unlimited
Yellowtail flounder		13	Unlimited
American plaice (dab)		14	Unlimited
Winter flounder (blackback)		12	Unlimited
Redfish (ocean perch)		9	Unlimited
Ocean pout, offshore hake, red hake, white hake, silver hake (whiting), or windowpane flounder		None	Unlimited

*GOM RMA = Gulf of Maine Regulated Mesh Area, see figure 1 below.

[†] Does not apply to charter/party vessels.

ALL VESSELS:

Possession restrictions:

- Vessels may possess fillets less than the minimum size specified if the fillets are taken from legal-sized fish and are not offered or intended for sale, trade or barter.
- For those fish with a minimum size restriction; fish fillets, or parts of fish, must have the skin on while possessed on board and at the time of landing. This means the entire portion of the skin normally attached to the fillet, or any other fish part, should remain attached.
- For purposes of counting fish, fillets will be converted to whole fish at the place of landing by dividing the number of fillets by two. If fish are filleted into a single (butterfly) fillet, such fillet shall be deemed to be from one whole fish.
- Cod harvested by recreational and charter/party vessels with more than one person aboard may be pooled in one or more containers. Compliance with the possession limit will be determined by dividing the number of fish on board by the number of persons aboard. If there is a

violation of the possession limit on board a vessel carrying more than one person, the violation shall be deemed to have been committed by the owner and operator.

- **Recreational and charter/party vessels may not possess or retain any cod from the GOM RMA from November 1 through March 31.** (Cod caught outside of the GOM RMA may be on board a vessel transiting the area, but only if all bait and hooks are removed from fishing rods and all cod on board has been gutted and stored.)
- Cod must be stored, so as to be readily available for inspection.
- Any trip covering 2 calendar days and over 15 hours in duration, may possess 2 daily possession limits worth of cod. Likewise, any trip covering 3 calendar days and over 39 hours in duration, may possess 3 times the daily limit, and so on.

Federal and State Regulations:

Recreational state fishing regulations may differ. Please consult with state fisheries agencies to determine possession, season, and gear restrictions under state regulations. When Federal and state regulations both apply, vessels are bound by the most restrictive requirements.

Gear Restrictions:

Individuals are prohibited from fishing with more than one line per angler and two hooks per line. All other fishing gear must be properly stowed as described in the regulations.

Restrictions on Sale:

It is unlawful to sell, barter, trade, or otherwise transfer for a commercial purpose, or to attempt to sell, barter, trade, or otherwise transfer for a commercial purpose, NE multispecies caught or landed by recreational fishing vessels fishing in the EEZ, or charter/party vessels not fishing under a DAS.

CHARTER/PARTY VESSELS:

Permit Requirements:

Charter/party vessels without a limited access NE multispecies permit that fish for or possess

NE multispecies in the EEZ must obtain an open access NE multispecies charter/party permit. Vessels with a limited access NE multispecies permit do not need to obtain a charter/party permit. Such vessels, when fishing under the charter/party rules, must stow all fishing gear except rod & reel or handline unless further restricted by a closed area letter of authorization (LOA) described below, and must abide by the restrictions on sale described above.

Charter/Party Vessel Certificate to Fish in the Closed Areas:

Vessels fishing under charter/party regulations may not fish in the GOM Rolling Closure Areas, Cashes Ledge Closed Area, Western GOM Closed Area, or the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area, unless the vessel has on board the appropriate LOA issued by the Northeast Regional Office. The LOAs are valid for a minimum of 7 days for the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area; 3 months for the GOM Rolling Closure Areas; and for the remainder of the fishing year for the Western GOM and Cashes Ledge Closed Areas. LOAs are available upon request by calling the Northeast Regional Office at (978) 281-9370. Additional details on closed areas are available in a separate information sheet.

As a condition of these letters, the vessel owner must agree to the following restrictions:

- With the exception of tuna, fish harvested or possessed by the vessel may not be traded, bartered, sold, or intended for trade, barter, or sale, regardless of where they are caught;
- The vessel has no gear other than rod and reel or handline gear on board;
- The LOA must be carried on board the vessel during the participation period;
- Vessels with the Western GOM and Cashes Ledge Closed Areas LOA may not use any NE multispecies DAS during the participation period; and
- Vessels with the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area LOA, may not fish outside of the Nantucket Lightship Closed Area during the period specified by the LOA.

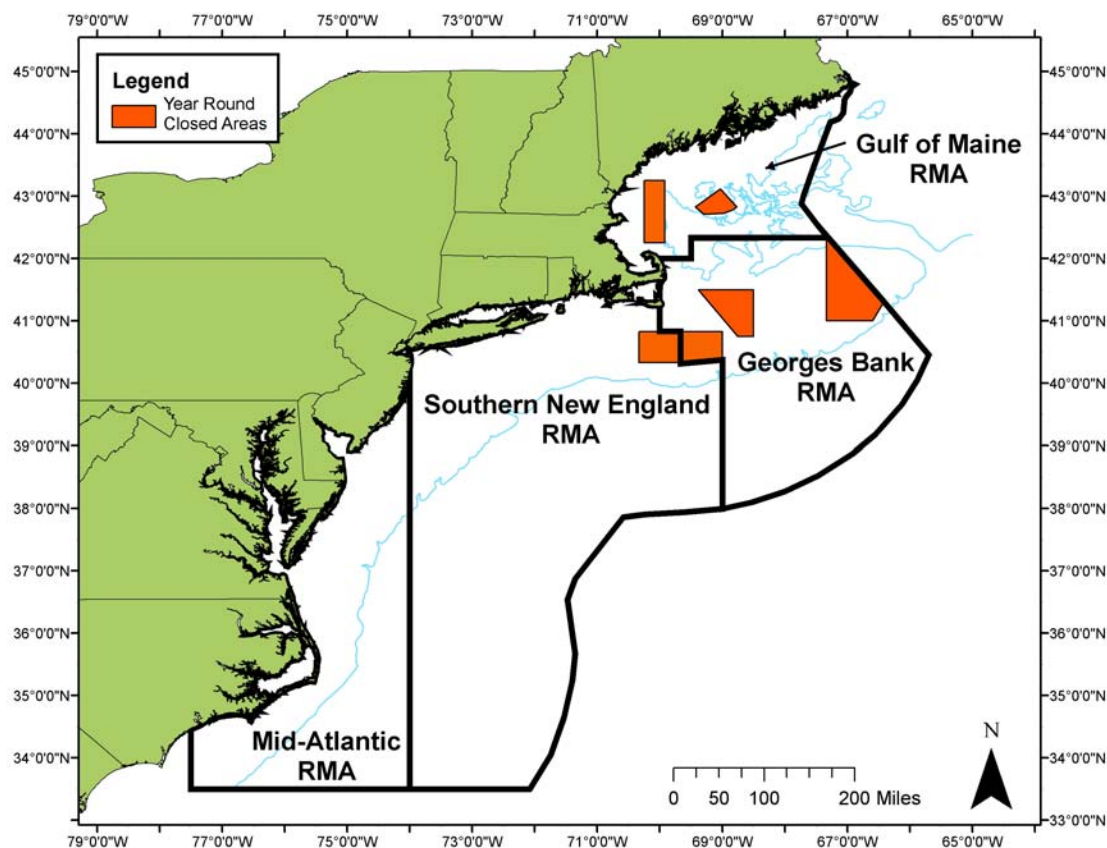
Prohibition on Fishing Under a DAS While Taking Passengers for Hire:

Charter/party vessels with a limited access NE multispecies permit are prohibited from fishing under a NE multispecies DAS when carrying passengers for hire. This provision is intended to more clearly distinguish between vessels carrying passengers for hire and other commercial fishing vessels.

Control Date:

Charter/party vessel owners should be aware that the control date for the NE multispecies charter/party fishery is March 30, 2006. This date may be used for establishing eligibility criteria for determining future access to the charter/party fishery. A control date is established to discourage speculative entry into the fishery while the New England Fishery Management Council considers whether and how access to the charter/party fishery should be controlled.

FIGURE 1 Gulf of Maine Regulated Mesh Area (RMA)



GOM RMA Coordinates:

Bounded on the east and south by a line connecting the following points:

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
G1	(1)	(1)
G2	43° 58'	67° 22'
G3	42° 53.1'	67° 44.4'
G4	42° 31'	67° 28.1'
CII3	42° 22'	67° 20'
G6	42° 20'	67° 20'
G7	42° 20'	69° 30'
G8	42° 00'	69° 30'
G9	42° 00'	(2)

1The intersection of the shoreline and the U.S.-Canada Maritime Boundary.

2The intersection of the Cape Cod, MA, coastline and 42°00' N. lat.